

Minnesota's Mayor in Washington: Working to Fund Minnesota's Infrastructure

As a former mayor of an urban city, I know the importance of infrastructure. I believe that the federal government has a key role to play in helping communities pay for roads, highways, rail systems, buses, and bike paths. Since I have been in Washington, I have been working to bring critical funding home to Minnesota for our infrastructure projects. I pledge to continue to this work this year as the 2005 appropriations process continues.

In 2004, I worked to secure over \$113 million for 29 transportation projects across Minnesota, including:

\$74.98 million for the Hiawatha Corridor Light Rail

\$5.75 million for the Northstar Commuter Rail

\$4.4 million for the Metro Transit Bus and Bus Capitol

\$3.75 million for Trunk Highway 610/10

\$3 million for the Lyndale Avenue Bridge

\$2.5 million for Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport Rehabilitation

\$2 million for Phalen Boulevard

\$2 million for the Anoka County Airport Runway Extension

\$2 million for Phase II of the Minnesota Valley Regional Rail Authority

\$1.672 million for the Greater Minnesota Transit Bus

\$1.25 million for Minnesota Guidestar

\$1.2 million for Hennepin County Community Works

\$1 million for the 34th Street Corridor (Moorhead)

\$1 million for the Falls to Falls Corridor

\$1 million for the Prairie Island Bridge

\$1 million for the Twin Cities Redundant Communications Pilot

\$750,000 for Highway 21 (Dakota and Scott Counties)

\$750,000 for the Northwest Quadrant Project (St. Anthony)

\$700,000 for U.S. Highway 212/County Road 134

\$500,000 for Metropolitan Council Job Access

\$500,000 for the Highway 52/County Highway 24 Interchange (Cannon Falls)

\$375,000 for Southern Minnesota Transit Vehicles

\$300,000 for Trunk Highway 241 (St. Michael)

\$250,000 for County Road 42 (Burnsville)

\$200,000 for Highway 10 (Ramsey)

\$200,000 for the 10th Street South Phase II (St. Cloud)

\$100,000 for the Metropolitan Access to Jobs Initiative (Fargo/Moorhead)

\$100,000 for St. Cloud bus replacement

\$30,000 for Southern Minnesota Transit Facilities

Minnesota Scores Big Victory in Senate Passed Highway Bill

Every six years, Congress passes legislation to improve and extend funding for federal highways,

highway safety, and other transit programs. Recently, Congress has been considering the Highway Bill for 2004 through 2009. The Senate and House of Representatives have each passed their versions of a bill, and now are working out their differences in a Senate-House Conference Committee. I am hopeful that an agreement can be reached soon because of the importance of this legislation, not only in terms of meeting critical infrastructure needs, but for the 2.8 million good paying American jobs this bill would create, including over 38,000 jobs in Minnesota alone.



My number one priority for this bill was to ensure that Washington no longer penalizes states that produce and consume renewable fuels like ethanol and biodiesel -- fuels that help reduce our national dependence on imported oil, clean our water and air, lower the cost of fuel at the pump, and create jobs and economic opportunity in rural America. The Highway Bill includes legislation I coauthored which revamps the tax credit for these renewable fuels so the Highway Trust Fund is held harmless. This means an 81 percent increase in Minnesota's share of federal highway funds - the largest increase in the nation. For the first time, this legislation also provides a biodiesel tax credit that will kick start this industry and trigger Minnesota's 2 percent requirement, the first in the nation.

The Highway Bill is also important to Minnesota because we have some of the most congested roads in the nation. The Twin Cities area leads the nation

in growth of congestion. In fact, Minnesota beats every other state in the percentage of congested urban freeways. This means that while legendary traffic states like New York, Illinois, and California certainly have more intense congestion in their big cities, we are far more likely to be driving on a congested freeway in Minnesota than in any other state. The Highway Bill works to relieve this congestion by improving and expanding our highways and roads while providing large increases for transit projects such as the Hiawatha Light Rail Line and the Northstar Commuter Rail.

Rural Renaissance Act: A Bipartisan Effort to Revitalize Rural America and Rebuild Main Street

Rural America cannot fully participate in the current economic recovery unless there is a significant investment in basic infrastructure - today outdated, inadequate, or nonexistent - like water and waste facilities; high speed internet access; affordable housing; important community facilities like hospitals, police, and fire stations; distance learning and telemedicine so rural doctors can take advantage of life-saving, cutting edge procedures in real time; as well as farmer-owned, value-added and renewable fuels projects. That's why I am leading a bipartisan effort with Senator Mark Pryor (D-AR) to pass the Rural Renaissance Act, which would pump \$50 billion in grants to rural America for these important projects through federal bonding. This is the fiscally responsible way of meeting these basic needs on Minnesota's Main Street, and I am pleased this bill has the backing of nearly 50 Minnesota and national farm and rural advocacy groups. Nearly every Minnesota community outside the immediate metropolitan area will be eligible for basic infrastructure grants under this legislation.

Protecting and Improving Minnesota's Water Quality, Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat, and Navigational Systems on the Mississippi River

This year, the Senate is considering a bill to extend and improve the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), important legislation that in past years has authorized important Minnesota projects, like \$10 million for construction at the Minnesota Lake Superior Center, over \$8 million for flood control in Stillwater, and \$4 million for wetland and wildlife restoration in the Redwood River Basin. The WRDA before the Senate now authorizes hundreds of projects just like these all around the country as well as important wetlands and fish and wildlife habitat restoration to protect and preserve our natural resources and our state's water quality.

Included in the WRDA is bipartisan legislation I introduced along with a number of my colleagues to provide for lock and dam modernization and environmental restoration on the Upper Mississippi River. This bill has the bipartisan support of governors and senators who represent the Upper Mississippi River basin states and various agriculture and environmental groups, providing \$1.46 billion to support projects that restore water quality and rehabilitate wildlife habitats and \$845 million for the construction of navigation improvements. I was pleased this legislation was included in the Senate WRDA bill.

While election year politics has unfortunately slowed progress in Washington, I am hopeful that we will succeed in passing WRDA sometime this year, or at least next year, and I am working to ensure that Minnesota interests and projects - such as flood control projects in Crookston and Granite Falls and the dike project at Holman Field in St. Paul - are ultimately included in this legislation.

UNITED STATES SENATOR NORM COLEMAN

**Working to Build and Improve
Minnesota's Infrastructure**

"There cannot be sustained economic growth and jobs creation without investment in basic infrastructure. Whether it be the Highway Bill or my Rural Renaissance Act, these initiatives are about improving the quality of life in our communities while creating good paying American jobs."

U.S. SENATOR NORM COLEMAN

Washington, DC Office

*United States Senate
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: 202-224-5641
Fax: 202-224-1152*

St. Paul Office

*2550 University Avenue West
Suite 100N
St. Paul, MN 55114
Phone: 651-645-0323
Toll Free: 1-800-642-6041
Fax: 651-645-3110*

Mankato Office

*12 Civic Center Plaza
Suite 2167
Mankato Place
Mankato, MN 56001
Phone: 507-625-6800
Fax: 507-625-9427*

<http://www.coleman.senate.gov>